



SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

*The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with
California Government Code section 54953.*

DRAFT MINUTES

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA
REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

President Kersteen-Tucker called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 5:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Margaret MacNiven, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Yoriko Kishimoto

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Counsel II Egan Hill, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Administrative Assistant Gabi Navarrete

President Kersteen-Tucker announced that the public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website.

1. Consideration of a Commemorative Bench in honor of Jean Rusmore at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve (R-26-146)

Administrative Assistant Gabi Navarrete presented.

President Kersteen-Tucker suggested it would be a good time to hold the bench dedication in the winter solstice.

Public comment period opened.

District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria reported no public comments were submitted.

Public comment period closed.

Motion: Director MacNiven moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to approve a request to recognize Jean Rusmore, open space advocate and significant supporter of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, with a commemorative bench on Anniversary Trail at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent)

2. Options to Fill a Board Director Vacancy Resulting from the Resignation of Director Jed Cyr (R-26-147)

Director Cyr recused himself from the agenda item.

District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria and Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak presented. Assistant General Counsel II Egan Hill and Public Affairs Manager Lori Low assisted with answering questions.

Director Riffle expressed concern that newspaper postings may be too restrictive and emphasized the importance of ensuring that the public in Ward 3 are aware of the available opportunity.

Director Holman agreed that newspaper postings would be antiquated. She suggested contacting the City Clerks of the Cities of Sunnyvale and Cupertino and having them provide a public service announcement of the Ward 3 vacancy and to also post a notice on the District's website.

President Kersteen-Tucker requested notifying Sierra Club and Green Foothills of the vacancy.

Ms. Soria stated staff can share the vacancy notice with the organizations.

President Kersteen-Tucker also inquired whether the notice could be shared on the Nextdoor app.

Ms. Low stated that the District could share the notice on the District's Nextdoor account and target the Ward 3 area.

Director Holman noted that there are advantages and disadvantages to using social media to publicize the opening. She favored one-way direct communication channels that allow information to be shared without inviting potential unproductive public commentary towards finding a good candidate.

Ms. Low offered to discuss with her team which digital communication channels would be most appropriate for publicizing the opening.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Soria reported no public comments were submitted.

Public comment period closed.

Motion: Director Riffle moved and Director Holman seconded the motion to fill the Ward 3 Board Director vacancy for the term ending January 1, 2029 by appointment.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 5-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent; Director Cyr recused)

The Board of Directors (Board) reviewed and provided edits to the following attachments to the staff report for filling a vacancy:

Attachment 2 – Application Form;

Attachment 3 – General Criteria for Appointment to the Board of Directors;

Attachment 4 – Procedures for Interviews; and

Attachment 5 – Timeline for Filling the Vacancy.

Director Holman suggested that an interview topic could relate to the candidates' comfort with holding and expressing dissenting opinions that differ from the majority vote.

Director Holman expressed concern about candidates overhearing other candidates' interviews. She suggested asking the candidates to wait in a separate room as a courtesy while others are being interviewed to respect an unbiased process.

Director Riffle requested that the District Clerk e-mail the Board requesting that directors submit interview questions.

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to approve General Manager's recommendations 2 and 4:

2. Approve as modified the following recruitment procedure for the Ward 3 vacancy:
 - a. The application form;
 - b. The general criteria for appointment to the Board of Directors;
 - c. The procedures for interviews; and
 - d. The proposed timeline for filling the vacancy.
4. Authorize the Board President to appoint Board members to fill the vacancies on the following committees for the remainder of calendar year 2026: Planning & Natural Resources Committee and Legislative, Funding & Public Affairs Committee.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 5-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent; Director Cyr recused)

ADJOURNMENT

President Kersteen-Tucker adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 6:43 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

President Kersteen-Tucker called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Margaret MacNiven, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Yoriko Kishimoto

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Counsel II Egan Hill, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Public Affairs Manager Lori Low

President Kersteen-Tucker announced that the public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website.

President Kersteen-Tucker dedicated the Board meeting to Director Cyr in recognition of his final Board meeting and in honor of his 30 years of service to the District.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public comment period opened.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent)

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

Motion: Director MacNiven moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent)

- 1. Approve the September 23, 2026 Board meeting minutes**
- 2. Approve Claims Report**
- 3. Amendment to the Classification and Compensation Plan for the Field Resource Specialist (R-26-148)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution amending the Classification and Compensation Plan changing the title of Field Resource Specialist to Field Resource Supervisor

- 4. Award of Contract for the preparation of a Sensitive Species Protection Program for Bayfront Preserves and the associated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance document (R-26-149)**

General Manager's Recommendations:

1. Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with Integral Consulting, Inc., to prepare a Sensitive Species Protection Program for Bayfront Preserves and the associated CEQA compliance document for a base amount not to exceed \$295,399.
2. Authorize a 15% contingency of \$44,310 to cover unforeseen conditions beyond the current scope of work.
3. Authorize a separate contract allowance of \$75,412 for regulatory permits to implement the option of high tide refuge islands (or other landscape habitat enhancements) as part of sensitive species protection actions, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount to \$415,121.

- 5. Contract Amendment for Consulting Services to Refresh the Employee Performance Evaluation Process and Develop an Organizational Culture Handbook (R-26-150)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to amend a contract with ReadySet Solutions Co., increasing the base contract amount by \$69,805 and adding a contingency of \$10,471, for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$379,546, to refresh the employee performance evaluation process and develop an organizational culture handbook.

- 6. Appointment of Three Measure AA Bond Oversight Committee Members (R-26-151)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Appoint Kit Gordon, Steven Permut, and Jeff Bryon to serve on the Measure AA Bond Oversight Committee for a four-year term.

- 7. Contract Amendment with Ascent Environmental for Environmental Consulting Services for the Purisima Comprehensive Use and Management Plan (R-26-152)**

General Manager's Recommendations:

1. Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with Ascent Environmental for additional environmental consulting services for the Purisima Comprehensive Use and

Management Plan in the amount of \$39,969, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount to \$340,800.

2. Authorize an additional 15% contingency in the amount of \$5,995 to cover unforeseen tasks and unanticipated issues beyond the current scope, bringing the not-to-exceed contract amount to \$346,795.

BOARD BUSINESS

8. Revisions to Board Policy 6.07 *Code of Conduct Policy* and Board Policy 1.06 *Board Officers*, and formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to support the preparations of a future Board Governance Workshop (R-26-153)

Director Riffle and Renne Public Management Group (RPMG) Senior Management Analyst Sonja Stott presented. RPMG Executive Director Nelson Fialho and General Counsel Hilary Stevenson assisted with answering questions.

Director Holman suggested that Board Policy 6.07 attachment 1, section 2.7.2, which states “If a member of the Board appears before another governmental agency organization to give a statement on an issue affecting the Board, the Board member should indicate the majority position and opinion of the Board,” be modified for clarity to reflect “...give a statement on *matters of the Board*.” She further suggested that section 3.1, which states that one responsibility of the Board President “...is to protect the integrity of the decision-making process by clearly stating motions” be amended to reflect that the Board President protects “the integrity of the decision-making process by seeing that motions are clearly stated,” since the maker of the motion should state the motion. She further noted that procedurally, the District Clerk calls the votes and not the Board President. She suggested a grammatical edit to the final sentence of section 3.1 to remove the gerund for “allowing” and “calling” to state “...allow balanced discussion, and accurately call votes.”

Director Gleason suggested that the Board receive reminders at the conclusion of the deliberation process to delete closed session materials, such as for performance evaluation documents, that are distributed via email or to implement an automatic deletion of materials.

President Kersteen-Tucker suggested that issuing a reminder to the Board would be helpful at the conclusion of the performance evaluation process that all documents provided in closed session must be either deleted, destroyed or returned.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

President Kersteen-Tucker expressed concern about amending the language in Board Policy 6.07, section 2.7.2.

Director Riffle suggested amending the section 2.7.2 language from “...a statement on an issue *affecting* the Board” to “...a statement *involving* Board business.”

President Kersteen-Tucker and Director Holman approved the revision.

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to:

1. Approve revisions to Board Policy 6.07 *Code of Conduct Policy*, with further edits to sections 2.7.2 and 3.1.
2. Approve revisions to Board Policy 1.06 *Board Officers* to align with and complement the updates to Board Policy 6.07.
3. Form an Ad Hoc Committee to develop the agenda and content for a Board Governance Workshop anticipated early 2027.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent)

9. Strategic Communications Plan (R-26-154)

Public Affairs Manager Lori Low presented.

Director Riffle inquired whether volunteers could be trained as District ambassadors for in-person events.

Ms. Low stated that staff could gauge volunteer interest but noted that previous efforts had generated little interest.

Director Riffle asked whether input on the Communication Plan was solicited from the volunteers.

Ms. Low suggested that volunteer input could be requested in the focus group round of research.

Director Holman emphasized the importance of communication in the bay such as in Ravenswood Open Space Preserve. She suggested providing education about the preserve, its purpose, and the sensitivity of its natural resources, as well as increasing ranger presence to help reinforce these messages and educate visitors.

Public comment period opened.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment period closed.

No Board action required.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Director Riffle reported on the September 29, 2026 Board Appointee Evaluation Committee meetings and the October 6, 2026 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting.

B. Staff Reports

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone provided an update on the Bear Creek Stables arena work. He also spoke about the proposed artwork at Ravenswood, and notified the Board that the City of East Palo Alto had decided for safety to close the jetties.

C. Director Reports

Director MacNiven reported that she attended the September 25 Guardians of Nature Benefit, the October 2 Puente fundraiser at TomKat Ranch, and the October 3 Volunteer Recognition Event (VRE).

Director Holman reported attending a tour at Ravenswood Open Space Preserve with Supervisor Gauthier and Director Gleason.

Director Riffle reported that he attended the Lehigh annual update on September 30, a site tour at Bear Creek Redwoods on October 6 in preparation of the Planning and Natural Resource Committee, and a Right Relations training session on October 7.

Director Gleason reported that he attended the Guardians of Nature Benefit, the Green Foothills Nature's Inspiration events on September 27, met with Ward 6 incoming Director Bryan Beck, attended the Lehigh Heidelberg update event, the VRE, and a volunteer event on the Bear Creek Redwoods easy access trail, and a hike at Ravenswood Open Space Preserve. He also spoke about Director Cyr's career with the District.

Director Cyr expressed appreciation for President Kersteen-Tucker's comments and stated that it has been an honor to represent his ward and a privilege to sit on the Board with his colleagues. He expressed well wishes for the District's future.

President Kersteen-Tucker reminded the Board of farewell event for Directors Cyr and MacNiven and commended the directors for their participation in the Guardians of Nature panel.

ADJOURNMENT

President Kersteen-Tucker adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Shaylynn Nelson, Deputy District Clerk
Maria Soria, District Clerk